

CLAIMS OF THE INVENTION

I CLAIM:

1. An information system associated with a gaming system including at least one gaming device, the gaming device arranged to present at least one game for play thereon, comprising:
 - a player tracking device associated with said gaming device, said player tracking device including a card reader, a keypad, and at least one display;
 - a player tracking host arranged to store data regarding one or more players of said gaming device;

a communications link between said player tracking device and said player tracking host over which information is transmitted;

an information system host, said information system host arranged to determine the eligibility of a player of said gaming device to multi-media information, said eligibility determined from said data regarding said player, and said information system host arranged to generate information for presentation by said player tracking device of said gaming device based upon said eligibility; and

a communication link between said player tracking device and said player tracking host over which said generated information is transmitted.

2. The information system in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said information host is arranged to determine said eligibility in response to an indication from said player tracking host that a player has begun playing said gaming device.

3. The information system in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said communications link comprises a portion of a communication network.

4. The information system in accordance with Claim 3 wherein a plurality of player tracking devices associated with differing gaming devices are associated with said host.

5. The information system in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said information system is adapted to generate information regarding a player promotion.

6. The information system in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said player tracking device includes at least one speaker, said player tracking device arranged to present audible information generated by said information system host.

7. The information system in accordance with Claim 1 including a top box mounted upon a housing of said gaming device, said top box supporting at least a portion of said player tracking device.

8. A method of providing information to a player of a gaming machine comprising: providing a player tracking device associated with said gaming machine, said player tracking device including a player tracking device controller and at least one peripheral, said at least one peripheral selected from the group consisting of a card reader, display, printer, keyboard and speaker, a player tracking host located remote from said player tracking device, and a player tracking network

including one or more communications links permitting transmission of information to and from said player tracking device and player tracking host, and an information host associated with said network;

determining the eligibility of a player of said gaming machine to certain information;

generating said information;

transmitting said information from said information host to said player tracking device over said player tracking network; and

presenting said information to said player at said gaming machine with said player tracking device.

9. The method in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said step of determining the eligibility of said player occurs in response to an indication of a player playing said gaming machine.

10. The method in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said indication comprises the transmission of player identification information from said player tracking device to said player tracking host.

11. The method in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said step of presenting information comprises displaying information to said player on said display of said player tracking device.

12. The method in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said step of presenting information comprises generating audible and visible information.

13. The method in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said information comprises promotion information.

14. The method in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said step of determining player eligibility comprises determining if said player has accrued a number of reward points.

15. The method in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said step of determining player eligibility comprises determining if said player is player a certain type of gaming device.

16. The method in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said information comprises information regarding a bonus.

17. A method of providing information to a player tracking device of a gaming machine comprising:

providing a player tracking device associated with said gaming machine, said player tracking device including a player tracking device controller and at least one peripheral, said at least one peripheral selected from the group consisting of a card reader, display, printer, keyboard and speaker, a player tracking host located remote from said player tracking device, and a player tracking network including one or more communications links permitting transmission of information to and from said player tracking device and player tracking host, and an information host associated with said network;

transmitting multimedia information from said information host to said player tracking device over said player tracking network; and

presenting said information at said gaming machine with said player tracking device independent of player activity.

18. The method in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said information comprises video and audio information.

19. A method of providing information utilizing a player tracking device of a gaming machine comprising:

providing a player tracking device associated with said gaming machine, said player tracking device including a player tracking device controller and at least one peripheral, said at least one peripheral selected from the group consisting of a card reader, display, printer, keyboard and speaker, a player tracking host located remote from said player tracking device, and a player tracking network including one or more communications links permitting transmission of information to and from said player tracking device and player tracking host, and a player tracking host associated with said network;

periodically accessing stored multimedia information located at said player tracking device; and

presenting said multimedia information at said gaming machine with said player tracking device independent of player activity.

20. The method in accordance with Claim 19 including the step of transmitting said multimedia information from said player tracking host to a memory device of said player tracking device.